

Tona Pop Up - Prototyping Final Report

Proposal:

The use of an interactive activation showcasing TONA's current and potential product categories would dramatically increase TONA's brand awareness through increased interactions, engagements, and purchase behavior among their core consumer base of women aged from 18-40 in life stages from early college to intermediate motherhood. Based on insights gathered from our research, a focus on functionality for reassurance, consistency to reduce decision fatigue, and inclusivity to satisfy the reliance on social proof, will translate directly to consumers' values of confidence, utility, and adaptability within their favorite athletic wear.

Operationalizations:

We have identified 3 key operationalizations to test, measure, and inform our recommendations for the success of TONA within the athletic category. All three of these will happen simultaneously in our one pop-up to generate measurable outcomes and define success metrics for different parts of our strategy. Modern pop-ups increasingly replicate full store experiences to create immersive environments that drive higher engagement and more meaningful consumer insights. Our design follows this trend intentionally, combining the flexibility of a temporary activation with the depth of a retail experience to test how TONA's concept could translate into a future brick-and-mortar store.

1: Functional Testing Engagement

- **Description:** An experiential retail approach that allows customers to actively test TONA products in authentic workout scenarios before purchasing, directly addressing consumers' need for functionality and reassurance in performance activewear.
- **Execution:**
 - Design 3-4 dedicated try-on areas that flow seamlessly into functional testing zones equipped with workout apparatus (barbells, free weights, yoga mats, pilates reformer)
 - Encourage consumers to perform movements relevant to their fitness routines while wearing TONA leggings led by industry experts in each function
 - Staff available to answer product questions and ensure sizing consistency across displays to reduce early decision fatigue and focus product consideration on function
- **KPI:** Conversion rate of testers vs. non-testers, time spent at testing stations, which activities drive most purchases

2: Community-Driven Traffic & Advocacy

- **Description:** A partnership-based activation strategy that leverages authentic social proof and community affiliation to drive foot traffic, build brand credibility, and create sharable moments that extend TONA's reach beyond the physical pop-up space.
- **Execution:**

- Coordinate rotating influencer meet-and-greets – targeting fitness and lifestyle influencers relevant to the 18-40 female demographic
- Establish try-on partnerships with local run clubs and activation clubs offering same-day discounts for participants who test products during club activities
- Create Instagram-worthy photo opportunities with bold, colorful visual elements that align with TONA's existing brand identity
- Transition toward micro-influencer and community-driven partnerships that honor TONA's mental health mission by fostering genuine relatability over aspiration, enabling consumers to see themselves reflected in brand ambassadors and cultivating the confidence that comes from belonging within their existing social ecosystems
- **KPI:** Event attendance numbers, social media engagement/reach, percentage of visitors from partner channels, repeat visits

3: Bundle/Add-On Revenue Optimization

- **Description:** A strategic merchandising approach that increases average transaction value while reinforcing TONA's premium positioning through curated product bundles, exclusive offerings, and value-added services that align with consumers' desire for utility and adaptability.
- **Execution:**
 - Position pop-up in affluent Austin neighborhoods, South Congress or the Domain, to leverage contrast/decoy effect against surrounding retailers.
 - Offer:
 - Pop-up exclusive limited-run colorways and print
 - Curated bundles (leggings + accessories + fitness class discount; leggings + socks + resistance bands)
 - Small-ticket add-ons at checkout (t-shirts, socks, yoga mats, stickers)
 - Digital products (online workout subscription access, newsletter sign ups)
 - Exclusive 'first looks' soft-launching prototypes of in-development products (bralettes, complementary activewear pieces) to test consumer reception and gather real-time feedback, leveraging research insights that ecosystem breadth builds brand affinity and simplifies choice architecture against competitors
 - Deploy messaging before and after activation emphasizing positive mental health outcomes and TONA's unique value proposition (The last leggings you'll ever need" "Fit for any function")
- **KPI:** Average transaction value, bundle attachment rate, percentage buying limited editions vs. core products

The insights that informed these activations were drawn from our conjoint analysis results. Preferences observed in the conjoint exercise, such as the desire for in-person product experiences and the appeal of curated product bundles, directly shaped our pop-up design choices, merchandising strategies, and growth market segments.

Growth Market

Segment 1: Brand-Conscious Experience Enthusiast

Representing approximately 60% of interviewed consumers, this segment prioritizes brand trust and holistic product experiences over price considerations. With minimal price sensitivity and strong preferences for familiar brands, they seek comprehensive, worry-free shopping experiences that align with their values and lifestyle aspirations.

- **Demographic:** Active women aged 25-45. Predominately employed professionals or fitness enthusiasts with discretionary income. Loyal to 2-3 preferred athleisure brands with years of consistent purchasing behavior. Highly engaged with brand communities and willing to invest in premium activewear.
- **Geographic:** Urban and suburban residents in major metropolitan areas. Digitally connected consumers who value both online convenience and in-person brand experiences. Frequent visitors to brand flagship store and experiential retail concepts.
- **Psychographics:** Seek trust, authenticity, and community connection. Brand familiarity represented security and quality assurance, reducing decision-making anxiety. They view purchases as investments in their lifestyle and self-care routine. Value transparency in product ingredients, ethical manufacturing, and inclusive brand positioning. Prize comprehensive brand ecosystems that offer coordinated wardrobes and membership benefits.
- **Behavioral:** Purchase based on brand loyalty rather than promotional pricing. Prefer brands offering complete product ecosystems with coordinating pieces, apps, and membership perks. Purchase frequency driven by new releases from trusted brands rather than immediate need. Willing to wait for preferred brands rather than substitute with alternatives.

Segment 2: Value-driven performance Optimizer

As the additional 40% of interviewed consumers, this segment balances cost consciousness with strategic investments in key functional features. While highly price-sensitive, they demonstrate willingness to pay for premiums associated with specific performance attributes that directly impact their athletic activities and daily wear.

- **Demographic:** Budget-conscious women aged 22-40, including students, early-career professionals, and practical fitness parents. Selective purchasers who research extensively before buying. Brand-flexible but quality-aware with purchasing decisions driven by feature optimization rather than loyalty.
- **Geographic:** Suburban and secondary market residents. Value-oriented shoppers who comparison shop across multiple channels. Comfortable with online purchasing with enough social proof and captivating promotional opportunities. May live in areas with limited access to premium athleisure retail.
- **Psychographics:** Seek functionality, value, and smart purchasing decisions. View activewear as utilitarian rather than a lifestyle statement. Prioritize performance features that solve specific problems as they're price-conscious but not quality-compromising.

Take pride in finding high-quality products at optimal value and making informed, rational purchase decisions. Less influenced by brand prestige and marketing hype; more responsive to tangible product demonstrations and peer reviews.

- Behavioral: Conduct extensive online research comparing prices, features, and reviews across multiple brands before purchase. Highly responsive to promotional pricing, sales events, discount codes, and value bundles. Purchase driven by specific needs creating a longer purchase consideration period but a shorter decision once the optimal value is identified.

MoSCoWs

Must-Haves

- Functional testing zones with 3-4 workout apparatus types (barbell, free weights, yoga mat, pilates reformer) that flow from try-on areas (enables comprehensive experiential value proposition across diverse fitness modalities)
- Try-on areas with consistent sizing displays (reduces decision fatigue, foundational to conversion)
- Strategic location in affluent Austin neighborhood - South Congress or Domain (critical for premium positioning and target demographic access)
- Staff trained to facilitate product testing and answer questions (ensures functional testing translates to purchase intent)
- At least one curated bundle offering (validates bundle optimization hypothesis with minimal complexity)
- Basic social media-worthy visual moments (captures advocacy beyond physical space)
- Core leggings inventory in multiple sizes and at least 2-3 colorways (foundational product offering)

Should-Haves

- Industry experts leading functional demonstrations at each station (elevates credibility and education)
- Multiple micro-influencer partnerships across various fitness niches for rotating influencer meet-and-greets (2-3 scheduled events minimum during pop-up duration)
- Run club/activation club partnerships with same-day discount structure (builds community proof-of-concept)
- Pop-up exclusive limited-run colorways and prints (strengthens scarcity/exclusivity driver)
- Small-ticket add-ons at checkout (t-shirts, socks, yoga mats, stickers)
- Pre- and post-activation messaging campaign emphasizing mental health outcomes and UVP
- Digital product offerings (workout subscription access, newsletter sign-ups)

Could-Haves

- Exclusive "first look" soft-launch of bralettes and in-development products (valuable data but adds complexity to initial test)
- Expanded bundle variety beyond 2-3 core options (allows more personalization testing)
- Advanced data capture systems beyond basic POS (heat mapping, dwell time tracking technology)
- Extended partnership network beyond run clubs (yoga studios, CrossFit boxes, etc.)
- Professional photography/videography for content creation during events
- Loyalty program enrollment station for repeat visit incentivization

Won't Haves:

- Full product line expansion beyond leggings + select accessories (maintains focus on core product validation)
- High-profile celebrity appearances or endorsements (intentionally pivoting to grassroots authenticity)
- Multiple pop-up locations simultaneously (concentrates resources and learnings in single test environment)
- Complex customization or made-to-order services (adds operational complexity that distracts from core testing goals)
- Extended pop-up duration beyond 2-4 weeks (keeps activation fresh and creates urgency)
- Permanent retail buildout features (maintains temporary, experimental nature of pop-up)
- Products outside activewear category (maintains brand focus and category clarity)

Final Recommendation Summary:

TONA's pop-up activation addresses a critical market barrier: the near-impossible task of converting brand-loyal consumers without tactile reassurance in a category where trust compounds through repeated physical experience. By positioning functional testing as the cornerstone—enabling consumers to validate performance claims across diverse workout modalities before purchase—the activation directly confronts the friction point where hesitation either converts to confidence or reinforces existing brand inertia.

Strategic placement within affluent Austin neighborhoods leverages the contrast effect to signal premium value while community-driven partnerships with micro-influencers and local fitness clubs honor TONA's mental health mission, replacing aspirational celebrity endorsement with relatable social proof that cultivates belonging within consumers' existing ecosystems. The merchandising approach tests revenue optimization through curated bundles and exclusive colorways while soft-launching prototypes like bralettes to validate ecosystem expansion—a critical lever our research identified for building brand affinity and simplifying choice architecture against entrenched competitors.

This integrated strategy transforms the pop-up from a sales channel into an insight engine, generating measurable data across conversion mechanics, community engagement patterns, and transaction optimization that will inform TONA's long-term retail strategy. Success hinges on accumulating micro-conversions—those small moments of reassurance through

fabric touch, movement validation, and staff interaction—that shift TONA from unfamiliar underdog to credible alternative worth the investment.

Ultimately, this activation bridges the gap between TONA's distinctive value proposition and the consumer's need for tangible proof, creating memorable touchpoints that extend brand reach beyond the physical space and establish the foundation for sustained market penetration.

Prototypes:

